

HERSETH SANDLIN ANNOUNCES \$1.167 MILLION GRANT TO MITCHELL TECHNICAL INSTITUTE

Brandon, SD (October 21, 2010)- Thursday, U.S. Representative Stephanie Herseth Sandlin announced an Economic Development Administration grant award of \$1.167 million to Mitchell Technical Institute for the purchase of a wind turbine in Basin Electric Cooperative's Crow Lake wind project in Brandon. Ownership of the turbine will allow students in MTI's Wind Turbine Technology program unrestricted access to a turbine for educational and training purposes. PrairieWinds, the Basin subsidiary that will operate the project, will purchase the electricity generated by the turbine, thereby allowing a self-sustaining revenue stream for MTI and the wind technology program. Additional funding for the project was made available through the Governor's Office of Economic Development, General Electric and through the sale of bonds under the state bonding authority. Crow Lake is also the site of seven turbines to be owned by the South Dakota Wind Partners, a group of 600 South Dakota investors who have joined to create a first-of-its-kind ownership model in the South Dakota wind industry.

"I am pleased that the Economic Development Administration closely examined and recognized the merit of investing in this project. This is a perfect example of the kind of private/state/federal partnership that will allow us to grow our renewable energy economy here in South Dakota," said Herseth Sandlin. "Ownership of this turbine is critical to the viability and the future of MTI's Wind Turbine Technology program, as it will give students access to hands-on training as part of their curriculum which is an experience that cannot be replicated on training modules. It will also ensure that South Dakota wind energy producers will have the capacity to serve our state's growing wind industry, and that MTI graduates will be well-prepared for employment in the high-paying renewable energy sector."

"EDA is pleased to partner with Mitchell Technical Institute to support this vital wind energy initiative that will help to keep the region competitive, while promoting a clean energy economy to create jobs," said U.S. Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Economic Development John Fernandez. "By prioritizing that 20% of the enrollees of the program to train and certify wind technicians are Native American, this investment reinforces President Obama's goal to expand economic opportunity for tribal communities."

This past January, Rep. Herseth Sandlin met with Assistant Secretary Fernandez, and on June 4th, Rep. Herseth Sandlin visited Mitchell Technical Institute (MTI) to discuss wind energy's potential to contribute to economic development. Rep. Herseth Sandlin was joined by MTI President Greg Von Wald, Economic Development Administration (EDA) Regional Director Bob Olson, state officials and representatives of the wind energy and electricity industries. Rep. Herseth Sandlin has worked with MTI on their effort to secure ownership of a wind turbine in support of curriculum programming in their Wind Turbine Technology program and encouraged EDA to support MTI's funding request.

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